

ARTICLE APPEARED
ON PAGE 4A

WASHINGTON TIMES
2 February 1987

Marine guard charged with spying for Soviets

By Bill Gertz
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

A Marine security guard has been charged with espionage for supplying the Soviet Union with the names and identities of covert U.S. intelligence agents in Moscow, the Marine Corps has announced.

Marine Sgt. Clayton J. Lonetree, 25, also has been charged with providing the Soviet KGB intelligence service with floor plans and office personnel locations in the U.S. embassies in Moscow and Vienna, the Marine Corps said in a statement released Friday.

The compromise of U.S. agents in Moscow is the second major security lapse affecting the CIA's most important intelligence outpost.

Edward Lee Howard, a former CIA case officer who had been slated to work in Moscow, defected to the Soviet Union last fall. Intelligence sources say he supplied the Soviets with vast quantities of top-secret U.S. intelligence information about CIA operations in the Soviet Union.

One intelligence source said Soviet counterespies would be able to "shut down" U.S. operations in Moscow, particularly contacts between American officials and Soviets working for the United States, as a result of the two cases.

The statement said the Marine commanding general at Quantico, Va., where Sgt. Lonetree has been jailed since Dec. 31, has ordered a pretrial investigation into a total of 19 charges.

Upon completion of the pretrial investigation, described as "akin to a grand jury proceeding," Sgt. Lonetree could be court-martialed on some or all of the charges, the statement said. A decision on the court-martial is expected within three weeks.

If found guilty on the single count of espionage included among the charges, Sgt. Lonetree could receive the maximum sentence of death under a law passed by Congress last year.

"The espionage charge . . . alleges that Sgt. Lonetree committed espionage by communicating descriptions of the floor plans and office assignments of the U.S. embassies in Moscow and Vienna," the statement said.

Sources close to the case said Sgt. Lonetree was trapped into spying by a female Soviet agent employed at the American Embassy in Moscow. U.S. officials suspect he may have collaborated with the KGB to plant electronic eavesdropping devices inside the embassy.

Sgt. Lonetree's alleged activities followed another embassy security failure. In late 1984 the Soviets bugged typewriters in the Moscow building, according to a Senate Intelligence Committee report.

"Conspiracy charges allege that during the period of September 1985 to December 1986, Lonetree conspired with three Soviet citizens to gather names and photographs of 'covert agents,' i.e., covert U.S. intelligence staff personnel; gather information regarding embassy floor plans and office assignments, and conduct meetings in Moscow and Vienna," the statement said.

The three Soviet KGB agents were identified as Violetta Sanni, a translator at the Moscow embassy; Aleksiy G. Yefimov, called "Uncle Sasha"; and Yuriy V. Lysov, dubbed "George."

The charges state that Sgt. Lonetree did "plan and conduct meetings in Moscow and Vienna" with the KGB agents.

In one instance, Mr. Lysov showed up "on Dec. 27 and 30, 1986, for scheduled meetings with Sgt. Lonetree" in Vienna, according to the charges.

The charges allege that Sgt. Lonetree "wrongfully and intentionally [did] disclose information identifying covert U.S. intelligence agents, with the knowledge that the United States is taking affirmative measures to conceal such covert agents' intelligence relationship to the United States, by identifying by name and delivering photographs of covert U.S. intelligence agents to Aleksiy G. Yefimov, AKA 'Uncle Sasha,' an individual not authorized to receive classified information."

The identity of the U.S. agents in Moscow were revealed to the Soviets between September 1985 and December 1986. Floor plans to the Moscow embassy were given to the Soviets in February 1986, while the Vienna embassy floor plans were stolen in November, the charges state.

Besides the single espionage charge, other charges against Sgt. Lonetree include three conspiracy charges for unauthorized discussion of national defense information; five charges of failing to obey orders, for not reporting contacts with citizens of a communist country; three charges of larceny; and seven "general" charges under Article 134 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

Sgt. Lonetree is also charged with having wrongfully and unlawfully made false statements while under oath concerning meetings with, and disclosure of information to, the three Soviet citizens.

In an interview published in a Michigan newspaper, Sgt. Lonetree told a relative, "I made a mistake, but they are making a mountain out of an ant hill."

L. Britt Snider, until recently the Pentagon's top counterintelligence official, described the case as a serious intelligence failure.

"He was in a position to do some damage," Mr. Snider said in recent interview.